

**MENTAL HEALTH BLOCK GRANT PLANNING COUNCIL
MEETING NOTES
MONDAY, JULY 30, 2007**

Present: Clare Munat & Marty Roberts, Co-chairs; Jim Walsh, Kitty Gallagher, George Karabakakis, Diane Smith, Paul Dupre, Lise Ewald, Melinda Murtaugh, Dawn Philibert

The meeting was convened at 2:15 p.m.

Welcome: Clare Munat opened the meeting by welcoming attendees. Meeting participants introduced themselves. Melinda Murtaugh explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review Vermont's FY '08 Mental Health Block application and offer comments about it. It was acknowledged that the absence of Council members from the Children's Statewide Standing Committee was due to the cancellation of that committee earlier in the day. Melinda said that she would review any suggested revisions to the application with Charlie Biss and Alice Maynard prior to submitting it and ask them how best to get input from the Children's Standing Committee members.

Review of Funds and Proposed Allocation of Funds: Melinda discussed the federal Block Grant funds for FY '08. Funding for FY '08 has been reduced from \$789,232. in FY '06 to \$780,471 for FY '07. Melinda reviewed the proposed allocation of these funds for adult services (\$312,082) and children's mental health programs (\$466,389). The group discussed the decreasing federal funds and the reality that, coupled with inflation, there are implications to receiving fewer resources. It was recommended that this be clearly noted in the Planning Council's cover letter that accompanies the application.

Dawn moved that the Planning Council adopt the recommended allocation of the estimated available FY '08 federal block grant funds as presented in the draft block grant application that Melinda distributed. Marty seconded the motion, no discussion ensued and the motion was unanimously carried.

Review and Discussion of Application Narrative and NOMS: Melinda presented an overview of the entire application and observed that this year the application must be submitted electronically so the hard-copy document has a different sequence and format from past applications. She reviewed the key components of the narrative and the National Outcome Measures (NOMS), and recorded edits and suggested revisions from Planning Council Members. The following issues were raised during the review of priorities:

- Numbers on employment among people with mental illness are misleading because they do not include self-employed individuals or people who are employed in bordering states. Vermont should be proud of its employment rates.
- A priority should be added that states: "Improve the system of care and treatment for people with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system (e.g. mental health courts).

Melinda called the Council's attention to the "Transformation" Table on page 74. The group discussed the challenges inherent in quantifying these outcomes but acknowledged that they are all important elements of a transformed system of care.

Future Actions: Melinda will revise the narrative according to suggestions made at today's meeting. Clare suggested that she and Melinda draft a letter from the Council to SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services. The draft will be circulated to Planning Council Members, who will be

asked to respond with any comments. The entire group praised Melinda's work on this Block Grant Application, and the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.